

IN MEMORIAM

WILLIAM HOLLAND DRURY
1921-1992

William Holland Drury, Professor at The College of the Atlantic in Bar Harbor, Maine, died on March 26, 1992. Born in Newport, RI, he was a 1942 magna cum laude graduate of Harvard College. He served with the United States Navy from 1942 until 1945, serving tours of duty both in the North Atlantic and the South Pacific. He returned to graduate study at Harvard after the war and was awarded his doctorate in biology and geology in 1952.

Dr. Drury was a member of the New England Botanical Club for forty-five years, first joining in 1947. He was elected to serve as Vice-president from 1962-65, and as President from 1965-68.

One of the country's best ecologists, Dr. Drury, among other accomplishments, showed, along with his co-worker Dr. Ian Nisbet, that the ideas of ecological succession found in most ecology textbooks are based upon wishful thinking, rather than on observed facts. He taught ecology and evolutionary biology at Harvard for many years. He was an active member of the Massachusetts Audubon Society, and served as its Director of Education and Research from 1972 to 1976. The esteem in which Dr. Drury was held by some individuals who knew him is largely the reason that Massachusetts Audubon today occupies Drumlin Farm, which was donated to the Society to help further his research on birds and ecology. He traveled widely, and was learned about many subjects, one of which was the flora of Alaska.

An active conservationist, Dr. Drury helped sound the early alarms about pesticides and other environmental insults. He served as a member of the President's Science Advisory Council during both the Kennedy and Nixon administrations. He was instrumental in reintroducing the peregrine falcon to the Northeast, and had recently spent much time on studying and enhancing diversity among shorebird populations around the Gulf of Maine.

In 1976, Dr. Drury joined The College of the Atlantic, where he was a teacher, researcher, and director of advanced studies until shortly before his death. He was proud of his role there, which he summarized to me as, "Whatever else we do for students, we certainly teach them how to think." — [Norton H. Nickerson]